

## CONSERVATION

**Duxbury Clipper**

Wednesday, March 29, 2000

### ★ **Land Acquisition Group Forming**

Selectmen agreed this week to make appointments to a new land acquisition task force next week.

This committee will investigate how to finance the purchase of conservation land, open space, and recreation and municipal land and will produce a report about long-term funding options by Nov. 30.

The Conservation Commission requested the task force in January. This committee will be composed of three citizens and members of the ConCom, planning board, finance committee, open space and recreation committee and fiscal advisory committee. Selectmen have been receiving talent bank forms from citizens interested in serving on the task force and said they have five qualified residents.

Task force members will investigate ways to pay for land, such as bonding, Proposition 2 1/2 overrides, and possibly the creation of a land bank. The Conservation Commission withdrew a previously discussed land bank article from town meeting. The state has failed to pass enabling legislation, called the Community Preservation Act, so any land

bank proposal must be accomplished at the town level. A land bank provides money for open space purchases by either a transfer tax on each real estate transaction or a surcharge on property taxes. This idea has been adopted by Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, Marion and Cape Cod. All four of these land banks differ in how the money is generated, managed and spent, however, the out-

come is the same — enough money is set aside so that the towns can compete with housing developers in buying large tracts of land.

The task force will also look into other ways to preserve open space such as easements and it will also attempt to achieve the land acquisition goals of the Open Space Plan and the Comprehensive Plan and the town-wide survey.